

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 STATE 174751

61

ORIGIN EUR-12

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DRAFTED BY EUR/EE:TPHDUNLOP

APPROVED BY EUR:AAHARTMAN

EUR/EE:NGANDREWS

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 174751

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, RO

SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR NICOLAE'S CALL ON ASSISTANT SECRETARY
HARTMAN; MIRCEA DEFECTIONS, THREAT TO AMBASSADOR

REFERENCES: (A) STATE 171366 (B) STATE 165379

1. AMBASSADOR NICOLAE PAID HIS FIRST FORMAL CALL ON
ASSISTANT SECRETARY HARTMAN JULY 13. SUBJECTS REVIEWED IN
PASSING INCLUDED NEGOTIATION OF LONG TERM ECONOMIC AGREE-
MENT; EMIGRATION AND MFN; POLITICAL SITUATIONS IN ITALY
AND SPAIN; PUERTO RICAN SUMMIT; THE SECRETARY'S OECD
SPEECH; AND PROBLEMS ARISING IN TRADE BETWEEN MARKET AND
NON-MARKET ECONOMIES. MEMCON FOLLOWS.

2. AT CONCLUSION OF HOUR-LONG, FRIENDLY EXCHANGE
AMBASSADOR NICOLAE ALSO RAISED SUBJECT OF TWO MIRCEA
CREW MEMBERS WHO HAVE TURNED UP MISSING, SEAMAN GHEORGHE
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CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 STATE 174751

VASIU AND CADET CRISTEAN UNGUREANU (REF A). NICOLAE

STRESSED IMPORTANCE ROMANIANS PLACE ON LOCATING AND TALKING WITH THEM. ROMANIAN EMBASSY DCM IONITA NOTED THAT BOTH ARE MEMBERS OF ROMANIAN MILITARY AND AS SUCH THEIR FAILURE TO RETURN TO THEIR SHIP IS TANTAMOUNT TO "DESERTION". AMBASSADOR NICOLAE MENTIONED POSSIBILITY THAT ONE OR BOTH CREW MEMBERS MAY BE SUBJECT TO SOME FORM OF COERCION.

HE MENTIONED A LETTER RECEIVED IN JUNE BY THE EMBASSY IN WHICH THE KIDNAPPING OF MIRCEA CREW MEMBERS HAD ALLEGEDLY BEEN THREATENED. NICOLAE REPEATED THAT HE FELT "KIDNAPPING" TO BE A POSSIBILITY IN THESE CASES.

3. HARTMAN OBSERVED THAT ONE OF THE TWO, VASIU, HAS ALREADY REPORTED HIS DESIRE TO REMAIN IN THIS COUNTRY TO THE INS AND THAT THE EMBASSY'S REQUEST FOR A MEETING IS BEING RELAYED TO HIM. HE ALSO ASSURED AMBASSADOR NICOLAE THAT WE ARE TRYING TO LOCATE UNGUREANU, WHO HAS NOT YET REPORTED HIS PRESENCE OFFICIALLY TO THE INS.

4. FOLLOWING THE MEETING WITH HARTMAN, AMBASSADOR NICOLAE AND IONITA CONTINUED CONVERSATION WITH DEPARTMENT OFFICER ANDREWS. NICOLAE SAID THAT HE HAD RECEIVED A PERSONAL THREAT ON JULY 9 FROM ONE JOHN HUSTEA, AN EMIGRE WHOSE PREVIOUS MARITAL PROBLEMS ARE WE BELIEVE WELL KNOWN TO THE EMBASSY. NICOLAE NOTED GENIALLY THAT HE HAD NOT BEEN INCLINED TO TAKE SUCH EMIGRE THREATS SERIOUSLY, BUT NOW HE HAD TO DO SO, BECAUSE HE HAS BEEN PERSONALLY THREATENED, AND IN LIGHT OF THE MORE SERIOUS "DISAPPEARANCE" OF THE TWO MIRCEA SAILORS.

5. ANDREWS TOLD NICOLAE THAT PROMPT COMMUNICATION BETWEEN EMBASSY AND DEPARTMENT ON THIS UNHAPPY TOPIC IS ESSENTIAL IF DEPARTMENT IS TO BE ABLE TO RESPOND PROMPTLY AND EFFECTIVELY IN SUCH SITUATIONS. REGARDING THE REPORTED LETTER THREATENING THE MIRCEA, IT APPEARS THIS HAD BEEN IN THE EMBASSY'S HANDS SINCE SOMETIME IN JUNE; WE FIRST LEARNED OF IT JULY 13. EARLIER NOTIFICATION OF THE JULY 9 THREAT BY HUSTEA AGAINST THE AMBASSADOR COULD ALSO HAVE BEEN USEFUL, ANDREWS NOTED. HE CONTINUED THAT THE DEPARTMENT OF COURSE TAKES SUCH MATTERS SERIOUSLY INDEED AND CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 STATE 174751

WOULD DO ALL IT COULD TO FOLLOW UP ON BOTH MATTERS. HE REQUESTED A COPY OF THE JUNE LETTER THREATENING THE MIRCEA AND ALSO ASKED FOR HUSTEA'S ADDRESS, WHICH IONITA INDICATED WAS AVAILABLE AT THE EMBASSY.

6. ANDREWS ALSO REVIEWED FOR AMBASSADOR NICOLAE THE DEPARTMENT'S POLICY IN HANDLING CASES LIKE THAT OF VASIU AND UNGUREANU. HE ASSURED HIM THAT DEPARTMENT ALSO

BELIEVES THAT A MEETING BETWEEN THEM AND EMBASSY OFFICIALS WOULD BE USEFUL AND THAT A REQUEST HAD BEEN RELAYED TO THE INS. WE HOPED TO HAVE VASIU'S RESPONSE SOON; AS FOR UNGUREANU, HE HAD BEEN IN TOUCH BY TELEPHONE WITH A FAMILY IN NYC WHOM HE HAD MET WHILE SIGHTSEEING BUT HAD NOT GIVEN THEM HIS ADDRESS OR REPORTED IN TO THE INS. WE HAVE

TOLD THE FAMILY THAT SHOULD HE CONTACT THEM AGAIN, WHICH SEEMED LIKELY, HE SHOULD BE TOLD TO REPORT TO THE INS AT ONCE.

7. ON JULY 14 DEPARTMENT OFFICER INFORMED IONITA THAT EMBASSY'S REQUEST FOR A MEETING HAS BEEN RELAYED TO VASIU AND DEPARTMENT IS AWAITING HIS RESPONSE. HE AGAIN REQUESTED COPY OF THREATENING LETTER AND HUSTEA'S ADDRESS FROM EDU OF ROMANIAN EMBASSY.

8. COMMENT: WE FIND IT HARD TO UNDERSTAND WHY EMBASSY DID NOT ALERT US TO JUNE LETTER ALLEGEDLY THREATENING THE MIRCEA OR WHY THERE WAS A 72 HOUR DELAY IN TELLING US OF JULY 9 HUSTEA THREATENING CALL. WE WILL INVESTIGATE BOTH OCCURENCES AND REPORT RESULTS.

9. WE HAVE JUST BEEN ADVISED BY INS THAT VASIU DOES NOT REPEAT NOT WISH TO MEET WITH ANY REPRESENTATIVE OF THE ROMANIAN EMBASSY. WE ALSO HAVE LEARNED THAT UNGUREANU IS EXPECTED TO REPORT TO INS IN NYC JULY 15, WHEN ROMANIAN REQUEST FOR A MEETING WILL BE RELAYED TO HIM. KISSINGER

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